

AN — Interior



A magazine by The Architect's Newspaper

October 2016

Young Studio's Tribeca Loft
Mexico City Design
Berlin Biennale

5





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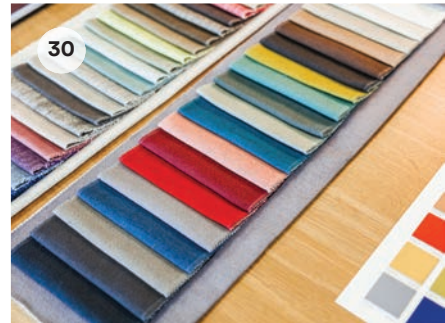
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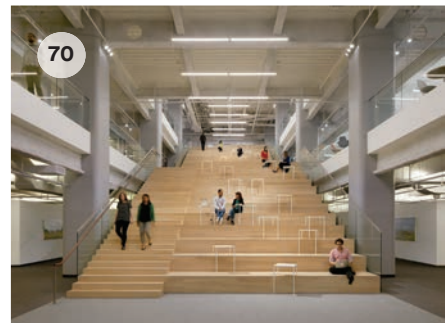
Cover image: Naho Kabuta



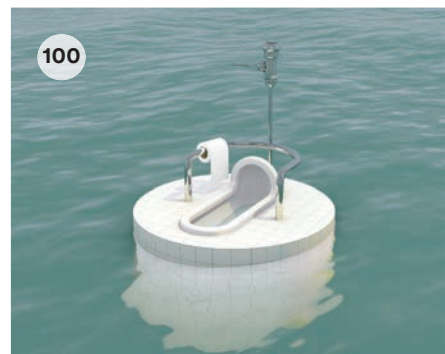
Courtesy Frida Escobedo



Courtesy Aito



Matthew Millman



Courtesy Berlin Biennale

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Naho Kubota

Inside Job?

By Olivia Martin and Matt Shaw

After the launch of our last issue, we hosted a panel discussion at ICFF Talks that brought together some of the top designers and thinkers in the field, providing us with many ideas to consider. We were joined by Bryan Young of Young Projects, Dan Wood of WORKac, Eva Franch i Gilibert of Storefront for Art and Architecture, and Florian Idenburg of SO-IL. For both the participants and the audience, the discussion provoked many new directions for the “interior,” primarily focusing on the ways in which we inhabit public and private spaces. We deliberated on the effects of networked technologies, such as social networks, data collection, and smart homes, as well as the legacy of modernism and its new conceptions of space. Layers of technology—both wearable and throughout the home—add another dimension to our expanded field of interior architectural perspectives.

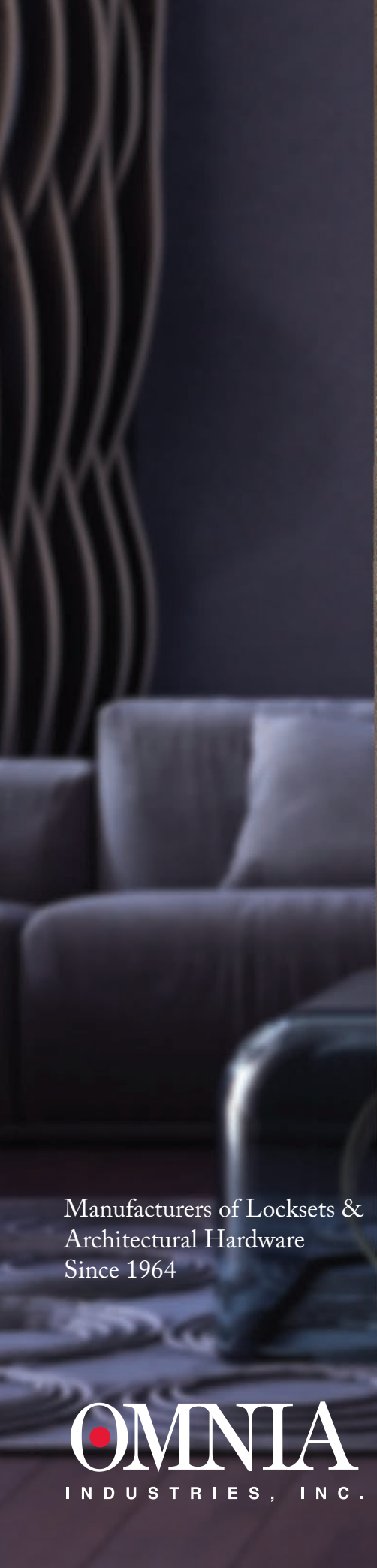
This issue is directly influenced by the ongoing conversation: The cover features one of Young’s projects, the Gerken Residence (page 60), reinterpreted by acclaimed photographer Naho Kubota. Then, partially inspired by our ICFF panel, Idenburg challenges preconceptions of what interiority means in 2016 in an essay for our comment section (page 104). Is it

a nest-like seclusion? Or is it about mixing people and things together to break boundaries?

At the Berlin Biennale (page 100), we saw a lot of art that asks the same questions: What is the self in the age of data-driven paradoxes, such as mass customization? What are the paradoxically dehumanizing effects of data culture, such as personalized spam? And in the face of these emergent issues, what role does contemporary architecture play in the creation of our identities? Or conversely, what role does identity-making play in the creation of architecture? Shared economies, like Airbnb, as well as gender politics and boundary-transcending global networks are all affecting how we work and live, and it is hard for architects to pinpoint exactly how this is influencing the profession.

Perhaps there are lessons to be learned from modernism, the original technological reorganization of space. Three exhibitions debuting this fall certainly seem to lean this way: They all shed light on modernity from a particularly interior perspective (page 88).

We hope you enjoy the ride as we navigate the choppy waters of the discipline, searching for the true potential of interior architecture to transform the way we live and work.



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Post-Modernismo

The new faces of Mexico City's design community.

By Antonio Pacheco

Mexico City is the fifth largest city in the world, with over 17 million inhabitants. There, below the looming volcanic peaks of Popōcatepēt̄l, a rising cadre of young designers is making its mark on this ancient megalopolis. Yes, the city's architecture schools like *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* and *Universidad Iberoamericana* are bastions of the now-classical modernism of Luis Barragán and Ricardo Legorreta. But in a metropolitan area so vast and so densely packed—Mexico City reportedly has about four times the density of New York City—handcrafted and informal solutions are never out of reach. It's within this tense, sweet spot that Mexico City designers truly excel: By combining high-design references with homespun folk art, designers are able to create works that are contemporary, but also contextual and artisanal, and that speak to the contested and refined realities of their home city. With a grab bag of contemporary stylistic influences coupled with the methodical pedagogy of their elders, the current generation of designers is quickly moving past the orthodoxy of the city's Modernismo traditions toward new enterprises that blend design, architecture, and furniture. The city will host Design Week Mexico from October 5-9, 2016, will be the World Design Capital in 2018—the sixth in the program and the first North American city to be named as such.

Escobedo Soliz

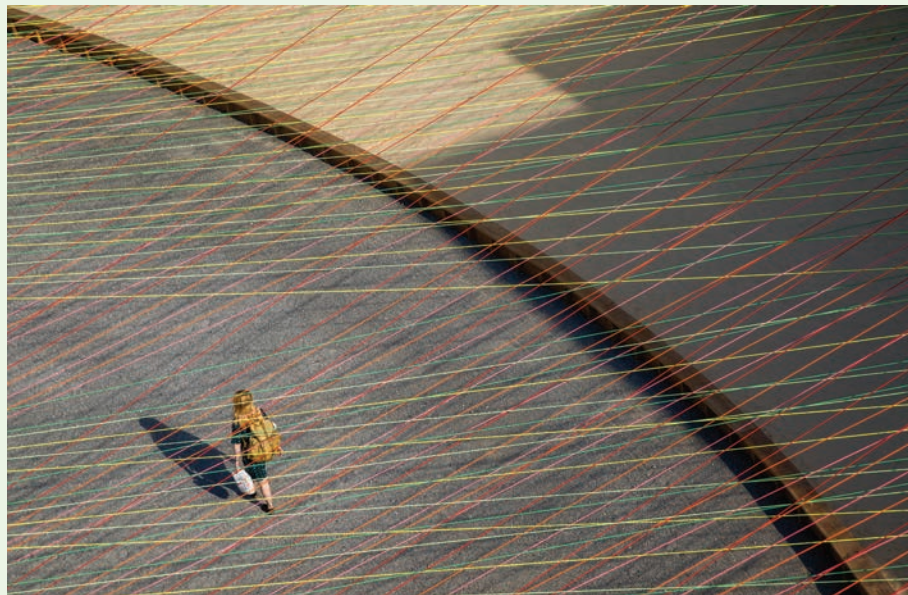
Established in 2011 by classmates Lazbent Pavel Escobedo Amaral and Andres Soliz Paz, who studied architecture together at the *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México*, Escobedo Soliz was awarded the prestigious 2016 Young Architects Prize (YAP) by the Museum of Modern Art for its *Weaving the Courtyard* project. The firm's ethos is rooted in mining the tectonics of history and tradition to inspire contemporary designs. With its YAP installation wrapped up, the firm is moving on to tackle several architectural projects it had in the pipeline prior to winning the prize.

Right

Frida Escobedo's design for skincare products store *Aēsop* in Miami, Florida, uses expansive panes of dichroic glass to subdivide and illuminate the store.

Below

Escobedo Soliz's PS1 MOMA installation is inspired by *tianguis*, an ancient market typology (still in use) that relies on temporary overhead coverings.



Courtesy Andres Salinas/MoMA PS1/Escobedo Soliz



Courtesy Frida Escobedo



Above

Frida Escobedo's design for the home and studio of the Mexican muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros involved moving two of the artist's murals from an inner courtyard to a public amphitheater.

Top right

Escobedo's swiveling contribution to the 2013 Lisbon Architecture Triennale swayed from one side to the other as participants placed their weight on the plywood structure.



Courtesy Frida Escobedo



Courtesy Frida Escobedo

Frida Escobedo

Among the best known Mexico City-based architects is Frida Escobedo, a graduate of Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City, and the Arts, Design, and the Public Domain program at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. She began her namesake firm in 2006 to much acclaim. The practice is known around the world for its critically engaging architecture: Escobedo's weighty plaza installation for the 2013 Lisbon Architecture Triennale and her dynamic reinterpretation of the Mexican muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros's home and studio stand out for their provocative embrace of rough materiality. In many ways, Escobedo, who cofounded her first firm, Perro Rojo, in 2003 at the age of 24, has been at the forefront of expressing the latent historical and stylistic tensions that define current architecture for years. The recent adoption and proliferation of her sensibilities among this younger group of designers prove she's been right all along.

Next page

Lanza Atelier's Casa L project combines whitewashed stucco walls with rough-hewn timber window frames and a ray gun-shaped floor plan.







Courtesy Omnis Luque/Lanza Atelier

Left

Casa L contains a curving, exterior paseo that is open to the sky with exposed wood joists shading cool floors, paved with Mexico City's ubiquitous red clay tiles. The walkway wraps the building on one side, creating a long antechamber between a pair of bedrooms and an enclosed garden beyond.

Below

PACA's Islas project is a collaboration with artist Emilio Gomez Ruiz and ceramist Hiroshi Okuno. Inspired by Thomas More's Utopia, the collection of 100 ceramic containers explores the concept of islands as isolated, idealized objects—hence the name, Islas.

Lanza Atelier

Lanza Atelier, founded by Isabel Martínez Abascal and Alessandro Arienzo in 2014, embodies the multifaceted, holistic approach to design that defines many of Mexico City's young firms. Their work combines fine, modernist-inspired precision and methodology with everyday materials. Arienzo, who was taught by Escobedo while at Universidad Iberoamericana and later worked in her office before cofounding Lanza, said of the firm's methodology: "We try to be more than an architecture studio. We don't like to specialize in any one thing. Instead, we like to specialize in thinking and taking all scales into consideration."

PACA

PACA is a dynamic group composed of a revolving door of collaborators that includes architects, designers, artists, biologists, and musicians. Founded by high school friends Carlos Maldonado and Juan Pablo Viedma in 2012, PACA's industrial design sensibilities and collaborative organizational structure allow the firm to engage in a wide array of work in a variety of media, from pottery, furniture, and sculpture, to candy, short stories, and graphic design.



Courtesy Aricette Armella/PACA

Pedro & Juana

Ana Paula Ruiz Galindo and Mecky Reuss, the designers behind Pedro & Juana, love to occupy contested territories, and describe themselves as “suspicious of ‘big ideas.’” Graduates of SCI-Arc and Delft University, respectively, the duo loves to jump scales. The work, which ranges from public installations and one-off productions to buildings, straddles a wide line between architectural, interior, graphic, and furniture design.



Courtesy Pedro & Juana

Above

Pedro & Juana's Carola 2.0 features felt padding to soften the chair's shaped wire mesh back and seat (left). The Mesa table features a volcanic rock top and a steel base (right).

Below

Designers Ana Paula Ruiz Galindo and Mecky Reuss populated the waiting room in the Chicago Cultural Center with their designs for the 2015 Chicago Architecture Biennial.



Courtesy Steve Hall and Hedrich Blessing, Chicago Architecture Biennial/Pedro & Juana



Jai & Jai Gallery

Jai & Jai Gallery, a 350-square-foot exhibition space sandwiched between a barbecue smokehouse and a former vintage music store in Los Angeles's Chinatown neighborhood, is a beacon in the city's bustling young architecture scene.

Whereas older generations strove for the empty warehouses of Culver City and Santa Monica, a new crop of designers looks toward the inner city as a place to make and exhibit art and design, positioning galleries and art spaces like Jai & Jai as loci of experimentation.

Since it opened in 2012, a who's who list of L.A.'s rising stars has exhibited work on the gallery's walls, creating a self-reinforcing narrative for the storefront as a kick-back space for L.A.'s young, energetic, and experimental designers. The gallery, which recently expanded into the neighboring music store, intentionally takes on challenging exhibitions and works with its artists to chart new terrain.

West editor Antonio Pacheco joined

Jomjai and Jaitip Srisomburanant, the sisters behind the gallery, to discuss its impact on the L.A. architecture scene and vice versa.

The Architect's Newspaper: Your art gallery is popular with young architects and designers as both a place to experience art and as a social hub. Was that something you set out to do when you started Jai & Jai?

Jomjai Srisomburanant: Not really. It mostly happened organically; [our events] always have that "Jai & Jai vibe." It's just like how we treat our family: You come to our house, have a drink, see some art. Thankfully, it has echoed through our business as well.

Jaitip Srisomburanant: The main component through and through, and

Right

Pita and Bloom's "Face to Face" piece from Jai and Jai's BUST show. The designers interpreted "characteristics associated with the facade" at a smaller scale, and the busts were displayed on pedestals.

from the beginning, has always been to engage the audience—whether they agree with the work or not—which is why we push for a mid-exhibition event to facilitate talks and discussions about the works.

So do you see the gallery as a type of incubator space?

Jomjai: For us, it's more of an open forum than an "incubator." The gallery allows an opening for new ideas to come in; we try to give artists a chance to express themselves, their ideas and theories, whether they're artistic, academic, or architectural.





Courtesy Jaitip Srisomburananont

This page

For Goods Used, Andrew Kovacs filled the gallery with his architectural ephemera, converting the space into an “architectural yard sale” (above). A typical scene at a Jai & Jai Gallery opening—the gallery’s patrons include the artists and architects themselves in support each others’ work (below).

Opposite page

For the CHESS group exhibition, Kovacs, one of the architect-artists that Jai & Jai represent, built an all-black chess set sculpture, “Castle.”

Jaitip: We like to engage everyone, and for us the gallery acts as a platform that lets us do that at equal levels. It’s cool to be a gallery where people can show something that they might not otherwise be allowed to show. Our goal is to move beyond the art and architecture industries themselves.

And how does the commercial component of your gallery play out when you have a following made up mostly of young people?

Jaitip: We still sell art—it’s a part of the social aspect of the gallery. We have a traditional exhibition space and the output, whatever that is, is sold. With our last show, *Resolution – The Digital Print Group Exhibition*, we created limited edition prints of the exhibited pieces to sell at more affordable prices to a younger crowd and to open up another branch for the gallery as a business and an organization that supports this type of success.







Jomjai: [Our other goal] is for you to come to an exhibition and walk out happy. The panel discussions and talks are important for the people who exhibit, and for the gallery itself. When combined, these events allow architects and designers to collaborate and plan.

What are some of your favorite shows so far? Which ones have been inflection points for the gallery?

Jaitip: To us as gallerists, group shows are really inspiring to work on because we coordinate a group of people who believe in one concept and help bring them together to tell a story. *CHES* and *BUST* were defining moments for Jai & Jai Gallery, as was *Goods Used*, a solo show by Andrew Kovacs in 2013.

Jomjai: But also, it's like picking your favorite child: It's impossible.

Above

An in-process shot of Bureau Spectacular founder Jimenez Lai's Beachside Lonelyhearts installation, which turned the gallery into a cartoon-like cave.

Below

Designer Maxi Spina's "In Turn" for the CHES exhibition has formal qualities that focus on concepts of profile and figure within the individual playing pieces.



Courtesy Jaitip Srisuburanont

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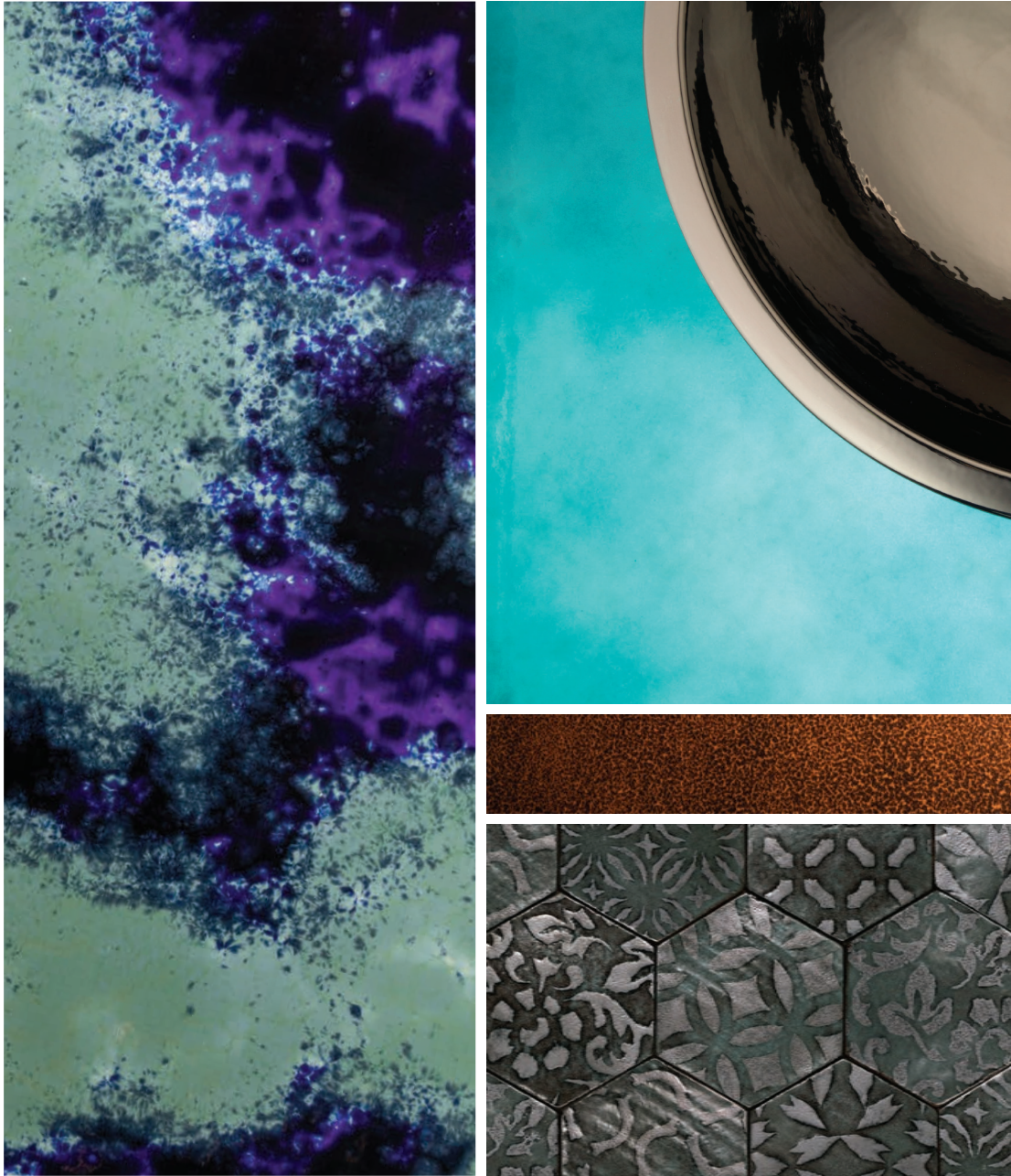
A Fine Finnish

Aito, the newest brand from the founders of Hem and One Nordic, takes a new approach to furniture production

By Olivia Martin

This Page

Aito is a new furniture design concept, in which clients and project dictate the inventory. Here, a team member puts the finishing touches on the Happy chair.



Showcasing new Italian ceramic surfaces including hand glazed slabs up to three by ten feet, metallic glazed features and artisan decorative tile.





Courtesy Aito



Left

Finnish designer Aarnio Eero inspects one of his iconic Ball Chairs. Aito bought the rights to several classic Finnish pieces for reproduction. Aito's teams are capable of producing prototypes and small runs in house (bottom).

Above

After Stefan Mahlberg's previous company Hem was sold, Aito took over its offices. Here, several pieces of Hem's best-known furniture, like the Pocket Armchair and Alle Table are on display.



"I've worked with many designers over the years and I used to try to give my own input and opinions," said design entrepreneur Stefan Mahlberg, of his latest venture, Aito. "Gradually I learned that it's useless, because who am I to say what the consumer might want?"

Aito, the latest venture from Mahlberg and Cezary Górczyński, two of the minds behind Scandinavian design giants Flexhouse, Hem, and One Nordic, is an attempt to push the furniture industry forward by taking a step back. Aito, a Finnish word that appropriately translates to "genuine," is a multifaceted brand that revolves around creating the highest quality product at the best value by leveraging the network of manufacturers and producers the team built through its previous companies.

On one level, independent designers and brands can work with Aito to produce virtually any furniture for any project. So, if a designer needs to furnish a hotel, retail store, or restaurant, he or she can utilize Aito to source the best materials and reliable factories to produce the necessary chairs, tables, or shelves—eliminating weeks of legwork and mitigating risk. That

same furniture could then be for sale through Aito. “Projects are wasted opportunities to build interesting products and then make sure they are available,” explained Mahlberg. Already, Tom Dixon, Harri Koskinen, and Ateljé Sotamaa are confirmed to be working with Aito, as well as many others yet to be disclosed.

What makes Aito radically different from conventional high-design brands is the level to which it is focused on its clients. “The consumer will determine whether or not the product is interesting,” said Mahlberg. So while the company’s connections and its designers’ portfolios are universally impressive, “Many of these



Courtesy Ateljé Sotamaa



Courtesy Aito



Kimmo Syväri

Previous page

Bubbles, colorful molded plastic seats designed by Kivi and Tuuli Sotamaa of Ateljé Sotamaa, were created for Fazer, a Finnish sweets company, and are meant to resemble hard candies (top). A set of Aarnio's Bubble Chairs hang in the Aito office (bottom).

This page

Ateljé Sotamaa also worked with Aito to create an entire set of furniture for Finnjäväl, a modern restaurant in Helsinki (above). A stack of solid wood dining chairs by Harri Koskinen (right).



Courtesy Aito

things have no relation to each other except that people want an authentic, well-made product—they are night and day in terms of design,” Mahlberg said. He went on to explain that while brands who represent Scandinavian design, like HAY, Muuto, and Hem, have “well-curated, nice collections, we also need a broader take on the aesthetic.”

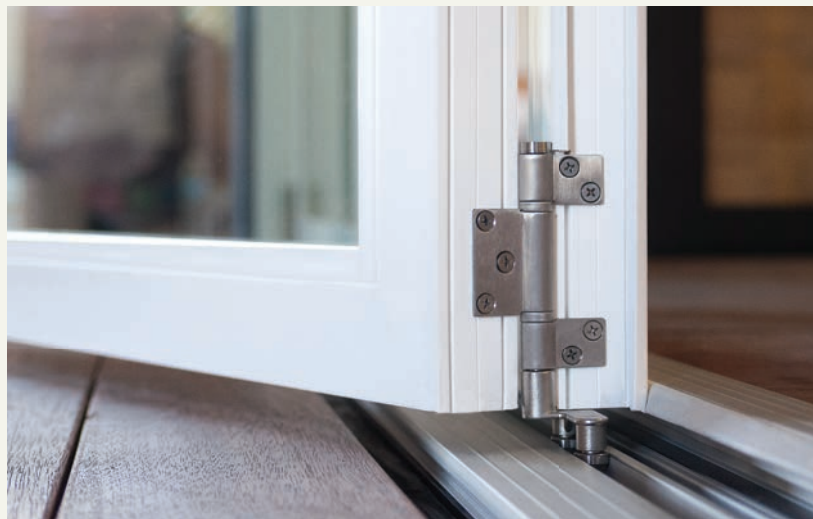
On another level, Aito is working within Flexhouse and its in-house design teams to produce its own projects. Conveniently, Aito was able to move into Hem’s old Helsinki office-workshop after Hem was sold this past February. The industrial space already had many of the components that Aito needed: A paint shop, woodworking

and metal working machinery, as well as CNC-milling, vacuum pressing, and upholstering capabilities.

With this setup, Aito has everything it needs to create prototypes, one-off furniture, and even run small series. Having purchased the rights to classic Finnish designers’ work, Aito will also use its new home to produce and sell legacy remakes of pieces by Ilmari Tapiovaara and Eero Aarnio. The plan, explained Mahlberg, is to reintroduce older models that he and his team feel will resonate with a broad audience.

The company will fully launch spring 2017, but a showroom is opening in Toronto this fall and furniture will begin to be sold at the end of this year.

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A new book, *Chairs By Architects*, by art historian Agata Toromanoff, explores the relationship between architects' buildings and chair designs. Here are a few excerpts from the tome.



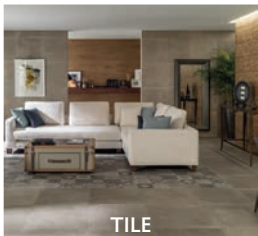
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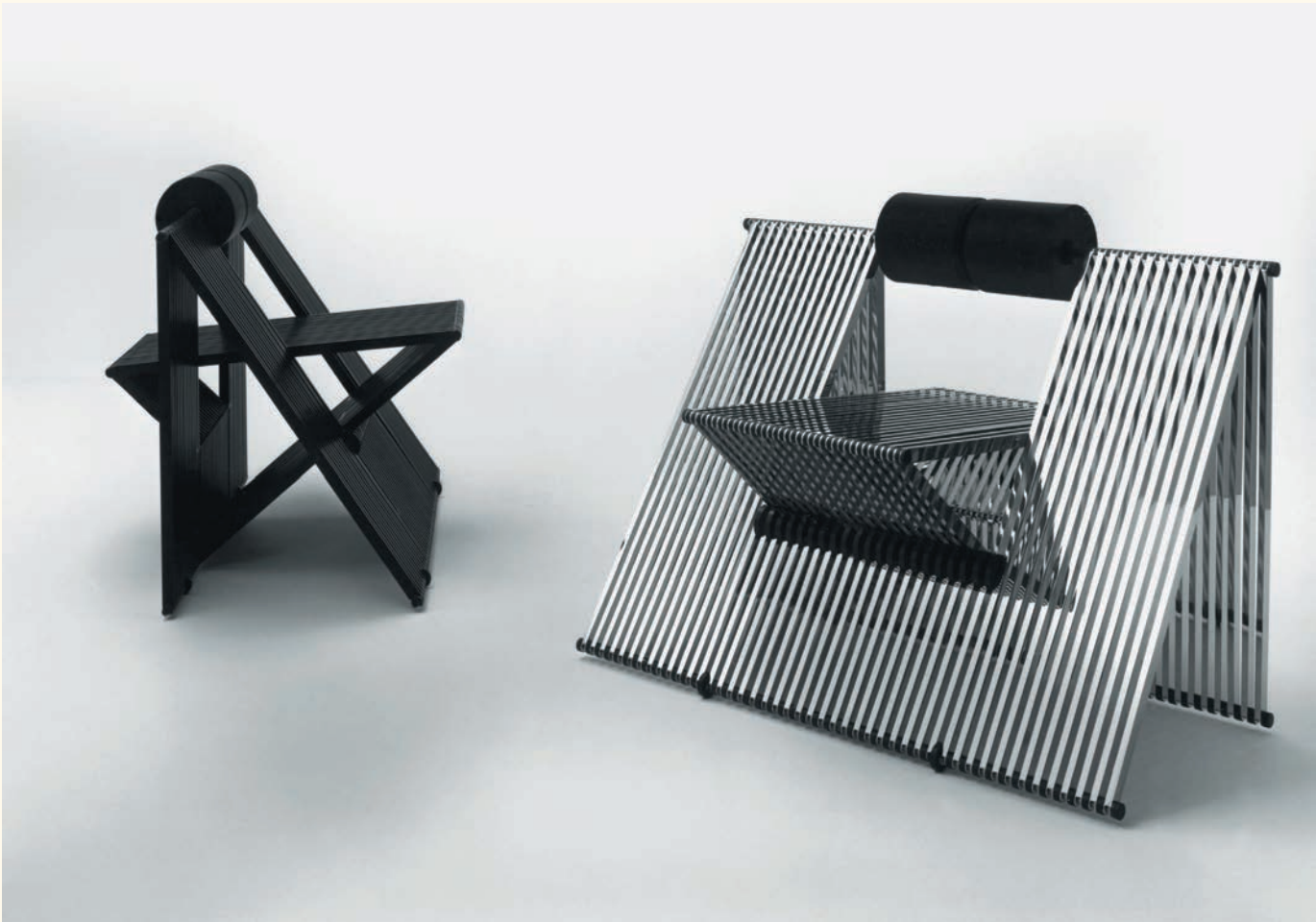
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Mario Botta

Above: Aldo Bello, Below: Errico Cano



Mikkel Frost; Bottom: Nikolai Moeller/Courtesy JDS Architects



Julien De Smedt



Top: Hiroyuki Hirai/Courtesy Shigeru Ban Architects; Bottom: Courtesy Shigeru Ban Architects



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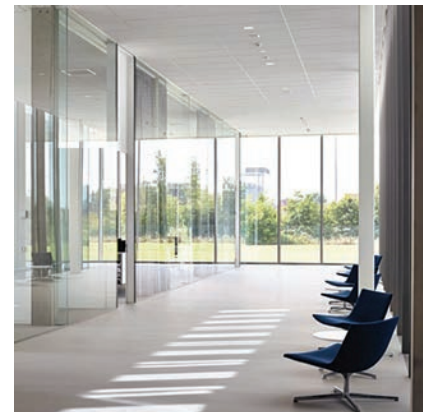
Delta Light



2tec2



Limited Edition



Argenta



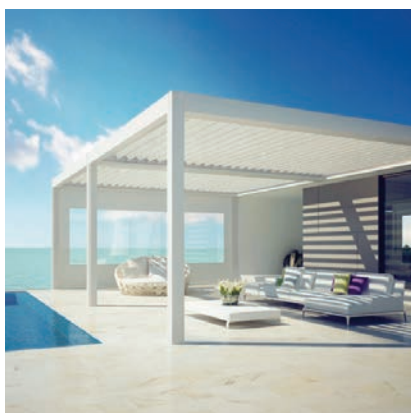
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Mad Men



1



2



3



4



5



9



10



6



8



7



11

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Manzoni Collection</i>
Ashley Norton
ashleynorton.com | 5. <i>Cup Pull</i>
Baldwin
baldwinhardware.com |
| 2. <i>DP425 Leather Scroll</i>
Drawer Pulls
Mockett
mockett.com | 6-9 6811, 80702,
6810W, 8444T
Nanz
nanz.com |
| 3. <i>Groove Cabinet Knob</i>
JKC&D
jkcandd.com | 10. <i>Rockwood ArborMet</i>
Assa Abloy
rockwoodmfg.com |
| 4. <i>Manzoni Collection</i>
Ashley Norton
ashleynorton.com | 11. <i>Kennaston Cabinet Knob</i>
Rejuvenation
rejuvenation.com |

Window Shopper



1-4 *Legacy Crystal Collection*
Atlas Homewares
atlashomewares.com

5-11 *Assorted Crystal Cabinet Knobs*
Baldwin
baldwinhardware.com

Hardware

1. *Bauhaus Pull*
Ashley Norton
ashleynorton.com

2. *Elongated
Shard Pull #2*
Marion Cage
marioncage.com

3. *Hedron Pull*
Marion Cage
marioncage.com

4. *Ultima Collection
OMNIA*
omniindustries.com

5. *HT9006-IN*
H. Theophile
htheophile.com

6-7. *Campaign
Collection Bar Pulls*
Atlas Homewares
atlashomewares.com

8. *Ultima Collection
OMNIA*
omniindustries.com

9. *Modern D Drawer Pull*
Rejuvenation
rejuvenation.com



Metal Militia

Polar Opposites

1. *8020 Knob*
Nanz
nanz.com

2. *Phenolic Door Knob*
JKC&D
jkcandd.com

3. *Zanzibar Collection*
Atlas Homewares
atlashomewares.com

4. *Black Porcelain Knob*
Rejuvenation
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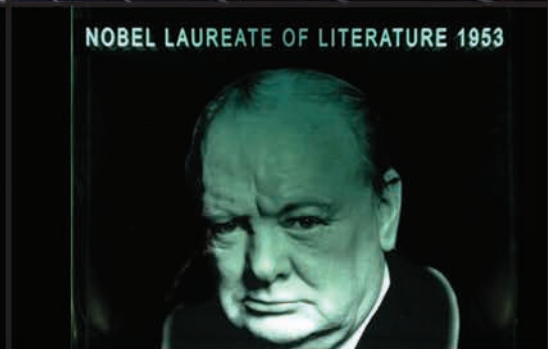
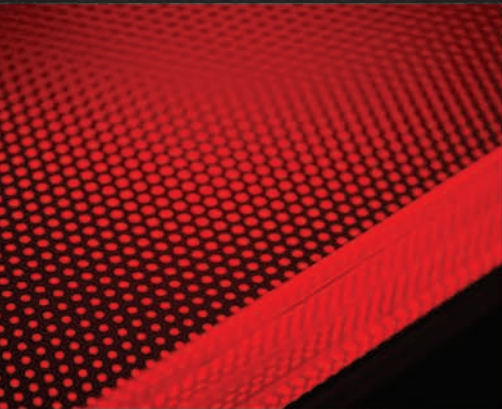
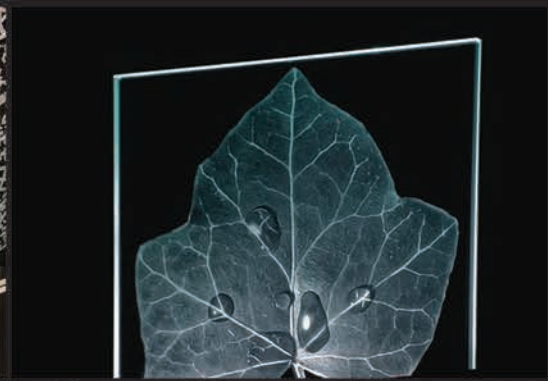




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Mangia! Mangia!

Luxury Italian-designed kitchens pull double duty as second living rooms, becoming the home's focal point.



Foodshelf Collection

Ora ìto for Scavolini

This highly customizable collection focuses on the relationship between the living room and the kitchen. By eliminating wall units and offering complementary furnishing options for both rooms, designer Ora ìto created a synergy that allows the rooms to combine.

scavolini.us



Air Kitchen

LAGO

The circular, independent Air Kitchen allows guests to take part in the cooking process, creating a dynamic and fun dining and entertaining experience. An integrated induction hob appears to float on its glass legs, and when the island is not in use, it resembles a regular dining table.

lago.it



Phoenix

Poliform (left)

Canaletto walnut can be paired with matte black or stainless steel to combine the warmth of home with the aesthetic of a professional kitchen. A new, oversize 33-inch counter width provides ample space for cooking, and the cabinets are available in six door-finish options.

poliformusa.com

Materia Collection

Doimo Cucine (below)

Tactility is behind the design of these kitchens, outfitted with a mix of natural and technical materials. A 30-degree recessed edge gives the illusion that the units are one continuous piece. This fluidity, paired with fresh materials like brushed graphite marble and supermatte lacquered wood, creates sophisticated vignettes.

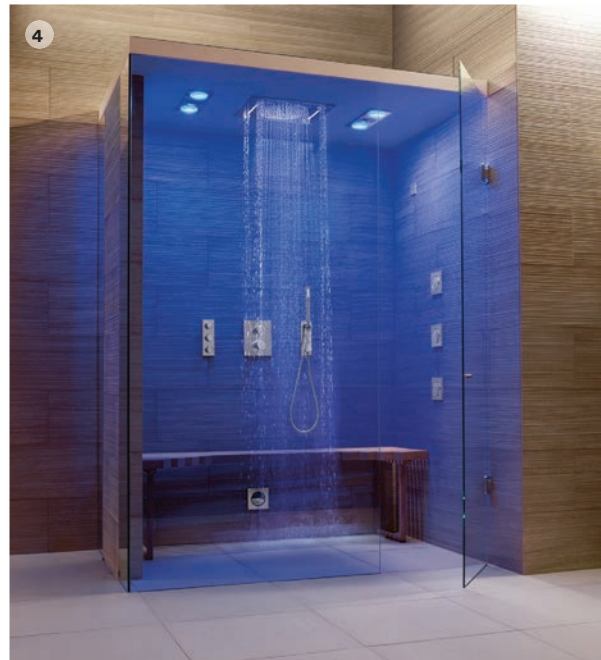
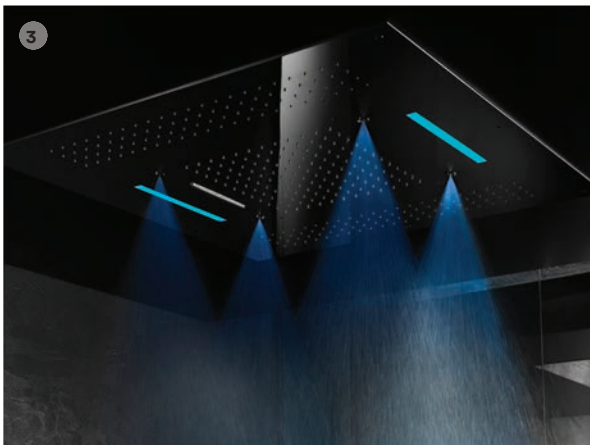
doimocucine.it



Courtesy Respective Manufacturers

Rain Room

Five standout shower fixtures bring five-star quality—via color, steam, or awe (or ahhhh)—to any bath.



Courtesy Respective Manufacturers

1 LampShower
Nendo for Axor

The first of its kind, and the second collaboration between Hansgrohe and Japanese design studio Nendo, the LampShower provides the ambience and look of a house lamp, thanks to its waterproof LED bulb. It is available in wall- and ceiling-mounted versions.

hansgrohe-usa.com

2 Ametis Shower System
Graff

Users can switch between gentle-flowing rain and waterfall settings with this halo-like system. An RGB LED is integrated within the ring and is capable of six different color options.

graff-faucets.com

3 SO613
MGS

Combining Italian design with Swedish engineering, these flush, ceiling-mount shower canopies can be controlled by remote to cycle through nine different colors and three water settings, with two preset relaxing and energizing combinations.

mgstaps.com

4 F-Digital Deluxe
Grohe

Designed to create “a home spa” atmosphere, this system offers multiple color and light settings, streams music from smartphones, and emits steam to create a superluxe bathing experience.

grohe.com

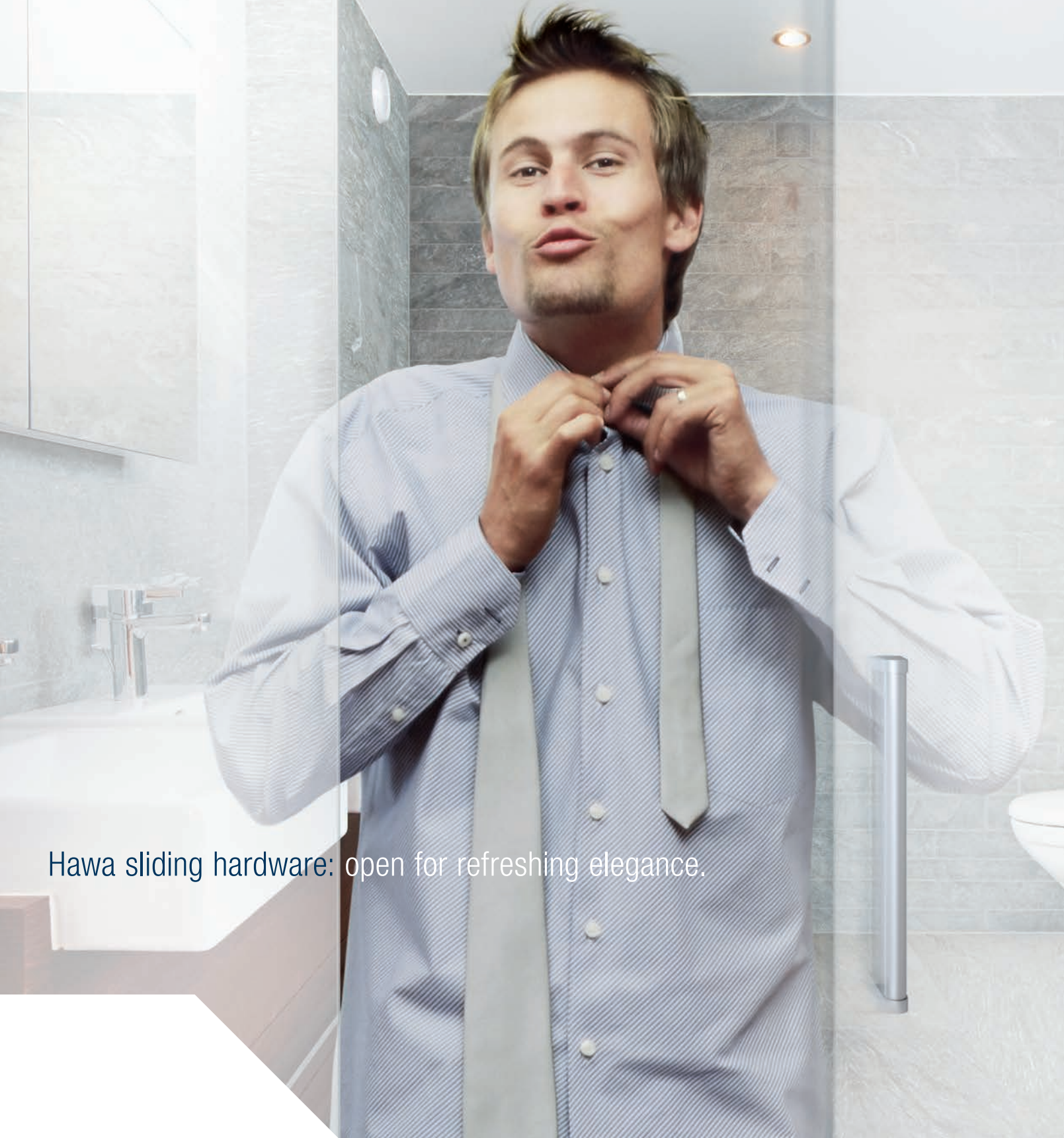
5 Zura Collection
Delta

The Zura collection blends rounded rectangular and triangular forms to create a modern and fresh style. The triple showerhead delivers strong water pressure and is available in three finish options.

deltafaucet.com



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Cast Master

Bryan Young and his studio, Young Projects, take a curiously hands-on approach to a Tribeca condo.

Jason Sayer

Photos by Naho Kubota

Right

Greenery frames a downtown Manhattan vista and spills down into an interior courtyard beneath a 1,500-square-foot roof garden—an uncommon sight in New York City.







Naoh Kubota

Left

On the 14th floor, a courtyard—or “glass core”—and an arrangement of voids enhance visual connectivity throughout the dwelling. These voids facilitate a sense of openness in the informal circulation spaces on the upper and lower floors.

Receiving light from all four sides of a Manhattan dwelling is a chance that seldom comes along. So Bryan Young, principal-in-charge of New York studio Young Projects, took full advantage with the Gerken Residence. Occupying the 13th and 14th floors of a historic cast-iron Tribeca building, the apartment’s 1,500-square-foot rooftop offers downtown views—notably of Frank Gehry’s 8 Spruce Street—while its roughly 6,000 interior square feet host a lush cutout courtyard and a collection of private, yet fluidly connected spaces.

Inside, the most eye-catching element is a polished stainless-steel screen found on the main floor. Divided into segments, it can be moved from one side of the building to the other, creating a partition across the space. Cuts made in the twisted, shimmering steel create a visually semipermeable membrane. Subsequently, guests can have restricted or open views depending on the position of the screen: It provides more privacy and opacity when viewed from the elevator entry, while it is more open and transparent when viewed from the living room.

This divider, Young explained, is one of four key spatial elements that organize the program on the 14th floor residence. Three of these—the fireplace, the courtyard, and the screen—can be found arranged around the fourth element, described by Young as the “plaster core,” a sensuously

Feature

textured volume that houses the back-of-house programmatic elements and allows the rest of the apartment to be more open.

The defining feature of the core, however, is its surface. At first glance it appears to be draped in a frozen, CNC-milled curtain, but upon closer inspection it becomes clear that the material is handmade plaster. With no indication of joinery, the surface's exquisite hand-detailing of serrated and curvaceous forms, augmented by light and shadow, produce a slightly strange effect, one Young describes as "tectonically unclear."

Like many research projects in the office, the concept was born from a series of questions about the possibilities

Right

The plaster casts applied to the core are six inches wide. In order to increase the possible combinations of tile arrangements, some of the final tiles were sliced in half and rotated 180 degrees.

Below

Thanks to the adjustable metallic screen, the living room on the 14th floor can merge with the adjacent dining area behind the partition to become an open venue during events or parties.









Naho Kubota

of new materials and the process of making.

Young emphasized that the final product is *not* pulled plaster, but rather an arrangement of plaster casts. To create the effect, Young said, six “master molds” were created using a variation on the traditional technique used to make crown moldings. Here, a custom designed profile, or “knife” and “horse” were moved back and forth laterally, pulled along the length of the custom designed rail to form the plaster in three dimensions. Done by hand, the technique produced casts where serrated edges peeled away in an S-shape, giving way to a contrasting smooth surface. These were then used to create the six master molds, which were used to make the casts that clad the core.

To ensure the monolithic quality Young desired, each cast rose to the same height on either side, allowing them to join in a vertically arranged running bond. “There is a continuity and discontinuity that is rationalized across the entire surface,” said Young. He added that the analog, hands-on method contributed to the sense of material ambiguity that the plaster creates. “It was interesting for us to take a centuries-old technique and rethink the manner in which that process is defined.”

The plaster allows the core’s interior facade to respond to the surrounding spatial elements. More dramatic, “aggressive” casts were employed

Left

While the plaster provided principal-in-charge Bryan Young with the opportunity for “any number of configurations,” the core’s interior facade responded to the surrounding spatial and programmatic elements. Young asked: “Where does it make sense to place regular and consistent casts compared to those that are more fluid and aggressive?”



Above

The steel screen both reflects and admits light. When extended, it provides privacy and spatial division. When pulled back, it allows the homeowners to unite the dining and living areas into one large entertaining space.

Right

A majority of communal living spaces are visible from the glass-enclosed courtyard, which provides views of vegetation from various places in the apartment—even those that are disconnected from each other.



on the volume's double-height spaces, most notably by the stairway, which is exposed to direct sunlight, while less articulated, "softer" casts were distributed elsewhere.

The courtyard or "glass core" lies opposite the plaster core and bathes it and the stairwell in light.

"As you move around the house, what initially reads as a negative element starts to read as a positive volume," Young said of the courtyard. Working with landscape design firm Future Green Studio, it is filled with vegetation that hangs from the rooftop. Young

intends for this visual connection to strengthen over time as the greenery piles over, offering a rare dose of thriving interior vegetation in an urban apartment.

The spatial organization of an interior courtyard juxtaposed with a solid, materially ambiguous interior wall gives the projects its *raison d'être*: The courtyard's plants glow with light, questioning familiar notions of interior and exterior, much like the transformation of plaster gives new characteristics and life to seemingly familiar materials, taking all of it almost into the realm of the unreal.



Stairway to Heaven

A growing financial services company brought in Bohlin Cywinski Jackson to create a flexible office space in San Francisco.

Sam Lubell

Whether or not we've realized it, most of us have bought products through Square, a company that supplies small businesses with the now-ubiquitous square-shaped hardware and software that remotely processes credit card payments. Square's new offices in San Francisco are meant to be as minimal, clear, and usable as its products.

Located in what was once a miserable, almost completely windowless Bank of America data center, the new 300,000-square-foot, fourth-floor office is just the opposite: an open, light-filled workspace organized by a central "boulevard," lined with gathering spaces (including a library, gallery, and cafe), and a wide variety of working spaces, including bench-style work desks,

Right

Custom white work surfaces complement the monumental stair that doubles as a circulation space. The stair is also used as private workstations as well as a casual conference area. The public domains in the office are lined in eucalyptus and bamboo plywood.



Matthew Millman



Above

The amphitheater stair is visually connected to the other parts of the office, which was once two separate floors, but now flows seamlessly.

Below

An employee sits at the bottom of the stairs. In the background, lights designed by Banks Ramos Architectural Lighting Design offer subtle illumination.

Facing page

The simplified color palette and material choices are a more muted version of the standard Silicon Valley tech office, while a variety of spaces allow flexible working options.

tables, and semi-private, acoustically lined “work cabanas.”

To manage the space’s ridiculously big floor plates (100,000 square feet, four times the typical size), according to Bohlin Cywinski Jackson (BCJ) principal Gregory Mottola, the firm studied urban precedents as varied as Dubrovnik and Milan, looking at everything from urban plazas to enclosed arcades. Unifying the office floors is a massive amphitheater stair that cuts through floors six, seven, and eight, and provides zones for individual work, group meetings, and large presentations. The stair is fitted with movable, lightweight powder-coated tables that snake their way down its length to create unique working and relaxing environments. Another office anchor is the eighth and ninth floor “Square Stair,” a floating switchback connecting the office floor to the main dining level.

“You’re giving up rentable floor area,





Matthew Millman



Above left

The office is conceptualized as a city, with landmarks such as a library, gallery, and cafe, dotted along a central circulation corridor known as the “boulevard.”

Above right

Rather than gimmicky breakout spaces and bright colors, BCJ made the communal work areas more restrained, such as these booths accented in gray fabric.



Below right

The former Bank of America data center complete with tile floors, fluorescent lights, and drop ceilings.



but the payoff is you have these incredible group amenities,” said Mottola. “The key was this idea of creating a really collaborative, transparent company. You don’t want to have one place feel disconnected from the rest.”

Clean lines and lots of white (on steel panels, stretch-fabric ceiling panels, and drywalls) reflect the brand’s identity and lightens the mood, while salvaged wood elements, like the eucalyptus amphitheater stair, Plyboo cabanas, and end-grain woodblock flooring in the lobby, provide warmth and visual interest. Splashes of color demarcate important spaces, provide needed accents, and reflect the locale: Bright orange, for instance, recalls the Golden Gate Bridge, while blue shades evoke the nearby San Francisco Bay. The company installed new windows along

the perimeters of the sixth, seventh, and eighth floors, drawing in natural light where there once had been none. Another big aspect of the design within a limited budget was lighting. BCJ employed a variety of techniques, from spear-shaped “light saber” LEDs above the boulevard to indirect lighting in the workstations and sculptural accent pendants in the lounge spaces.

“We tried to make the most of those dramatic moments when we could,” said Mottola, who noted that Square was drawn to BCJ’s clean work for Apple’s stores, but not its purely monochrome palette. As the company grows at an exponential rate, the airy, collaborative, and flexible spaces will no doubt come in handy. “We want them to be able to grow and shift over time,” he added.







Not Plain Jane

AiF transforms a very '70s artist's loft into an elegant home for a growing Manhattan family.

By Audrey Wachs



Except for the rarified homes of the rich and famous (or just plain rich), “spacious” is a relative term in New York real estate. Finding enough space for a growing family can be a challenge, so many choose to stay in place and maximize the square footage they have, any way they can.

For a loft on Jane Street, on a prime West Village corner, one family commissioned Architecture in Formation (AiF) to design a space that was warm, refined, and practical, and that took advantage of the 13-foot ceilings to compensate for comparatively little floor space.

“Before our renovation, the space was this classic hodgepodge 1970s artist’s studio that featured all the horrible tropes from that period,” said principal Matthew Bremer. The family needed room for more members, and once the ’70s touches were removed, the pre-war, former manufacturing building offered plenty of flexibility for a mutable layout with ample storage.

Left

Raw materials such as exposed electrical pipes are juxtaposed with modern elements such as a table and mirror from One Kings Lane.

Below

A mercury-etched, reflective glass finish on the kitchen wall is from Seoul Glass Interiors. The chandelier in the dining room is by Edge Lighting from Lightology. The marble countertop is from European Granite and Marble.

Facing page

The renovated pre-war industrial building features large arched windows that provide a rich backdrop for modern furnishings such as the dining chairs and table from Restoration Hardware.







“The space is a celebration of storage and display, and articulates the positive relationship between the two—it’s 95 percent storage, five percent display,” Bremer said. The overall design stems from the white-accented arched living room window, which floods common

areas with sunlight. Steel columns and beams are accented by raw brick and semi-industrial touches, like the dining room light switches, while teal counter-height chairs and a dark blue island add a subtle warmth that complements the lacquered cabinets.



Above

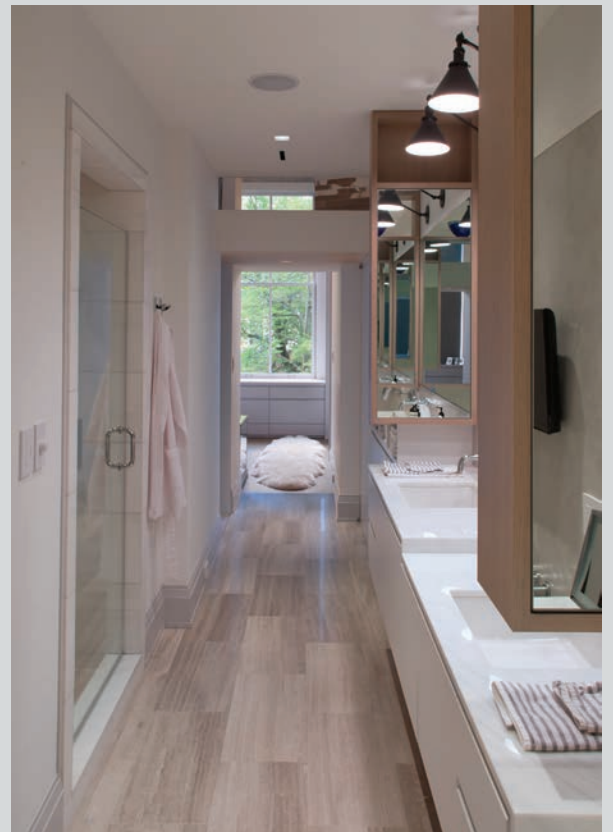
The master bedroom features a bed and headboard by Restoration Hardware and tables by One Kings Lane. The custom staircase is from Bowery Restaurant Supply.

Right

The master bath is outfitted with accessories from Lefroy Brooks and fixtures from Kohler.

The family actually cooks (“unlike some of my Manhattan clients”) and entertains, so kitchen appliances and fixtures are top-of-the-line functionally, not just showpieces.

Taking advantage of the soaring ceilings, the architects were able to create a lofted mezzanine space—for sleeping, storage, or studying—above the bathrooms and closets that is accessed from a ship’s ladder in the master bedroom. The transition from public to private space is grounded by a pocket door between the master bedroom that allows the space to merge with the main living areas, if desired. At the ground level, the apartment is scaled to children, as well as four-legged family members—there are dog bowls built into the kitchen island. From every angle, the 1,500-square-foot home expresses coolness and subtle contrast in an extraordinary volume.



Check It Out



Pittsburgh and New York-based Front Studio created a local library in Sharpsburg, Pennsylvania, that has become a magnet for the community thanks to its smart use of colors and site-specific materials that reflect the town's industrial heritage.

A little library in Pennsylvania makes a big impression thanks to Front Studio's colorful design.

Olivia Martin _____







In the unassuming town of Sharpsburg, Pennsylvania, Front Studio created a vibrant community library that makes a major visual impact. “Our work is based on the importance of making architecture experiential and memorable so that it fosters a higher level of awareness in people who don’t normally interact with it,” said principal Art Lubetz, who spearheaded the project.

Historically, Sharpsburg is an industrial, blue-collar town—many of its citizens work for the local H.J. Heinz Company. To reflect this heritage and to help stay within the restrictive budget, Lubetz and his team picked industrial elements, like the exterior corrugated metal paneling, concrete flooring, and exposed trusses. Each of the “building blocks” is painted

Left

The eye-catching garage door is a straight-forward design solution to open up the interior space to the library’s courtyard. Front Studio principal Art Lubetz and his team selected the interior furnishings, opting for cheery, but durable Panton Junior chairs and Eames elephants from Vitra and low, round tables from Symphony.

Below

Lime lounge chairs from David Edward offset bright purple walls and muted concrete floors by Pecora Flooring.



Massery Photography



the exact same bright color inside and out so that the interior is clearly communicated to the street. The bold hues make the material palette feel airy and energetic, an appropriate atmosphere for the many children who frequent the space.

Due to its location—just across the way from the community center and near the community garden—the Sharpsburg Library is a major gathering center for the little town. “It’s flexible and adaptable,” said Lubetz. “There’s a dynamic overlap between the old building and the new, the interior and the exterior, and soft and hard surfaces.”

Despite its fragmented appearance on the outside, the volumes connect fluidly on the inside, even enveloping the site’s existing structure (an Indian restaurant) without breaking the flow, making wayfinding within the library simple. “The volumes intersect like a

piece of sculpture,” said Lubetz. “I like to think that there is an element of art about this place....I’ve been around long enough to believe that architecture can be art.”

Lubetz and his team also sourced the furniture, which turned out to be a challenge. “It was tricky to find relatively inexpensive stuff that was durable and colorful—like the children’s [Verner] Panton chairs,” Lubetz explained. Front Studio designed a few pieces as well, such as the library’s main desk.

Other playful touches, like the garage door out to the courtyard and the large exterior circular cutouts, not only “bond the site to its environment,” but are meant to evoke positive emotions: “Kids love this place because it’s so vibrant,” said Lubetz. “And people still call me because they saw it driving down the street and it made them smile.”

Above

Although the library looks like an industrial reuse project, it was built from the ground up, with the exception of a little restaurant that was originally on the site. To create maximum visual impact, Lubetz wrapped the existing structure within the new building.



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This image: Courtesy Jewish Museum; Below left: Mark Lyon

Interior (on) View

This fall, artists, architects, and curators explore and expand the boundaries of what “interior” means in three major exhibitions.

By Jane Levere



Pierre Chareau: Modern Architecture and Design

The Jewish Museum,
1109 5th Avenue, New York
November 4–March 26

Pierre Chareau: Modern Architecture and Design will zero in on the legendary French designer and architect who rose from modest beginnings in Bordeaux, France—with no formal training as an architect—to become one of the most sought-after designers in Europe. His interiors and furniture balanced the opulence of traditional French decorative arts with the clean lines and industrial materials of modernism.

The exhibition will place Chareau within the context of France between World War I and II by exploring his influential patrons, engagement with top artists, and designs for the film industry. Paintings, sculptures, and drawings from his personal collection—by artists such as Piet Mondrian, Marc Chagall, and Amedeo Modigliani—will be on display, as will his furniture and light fixtures, vintage photographs, and the pochoir prints he made of his interiors. Also featured will be his designs for important projects in Europe and America, including the *Maison de Verre*, the 1932 classic modernist home in Paris, and the 1947 house he designed for the artist Robert Motherwell in East Hampton, New York, that was later demolished.

The exhibition also will explore Chareau's flight from Nazi persecution in France to New York; his attempts to rebuild his career there; and the dispersal of many of his works during and after World War II.

AN — Interior



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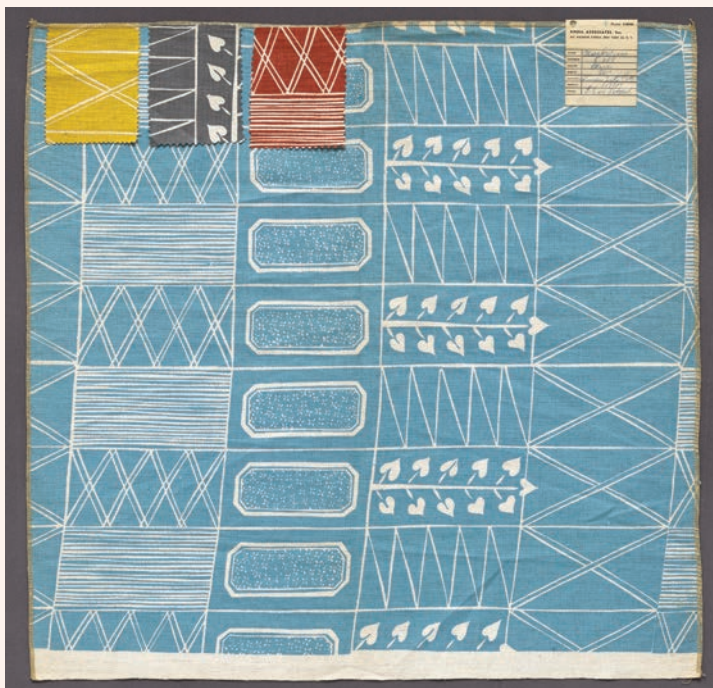
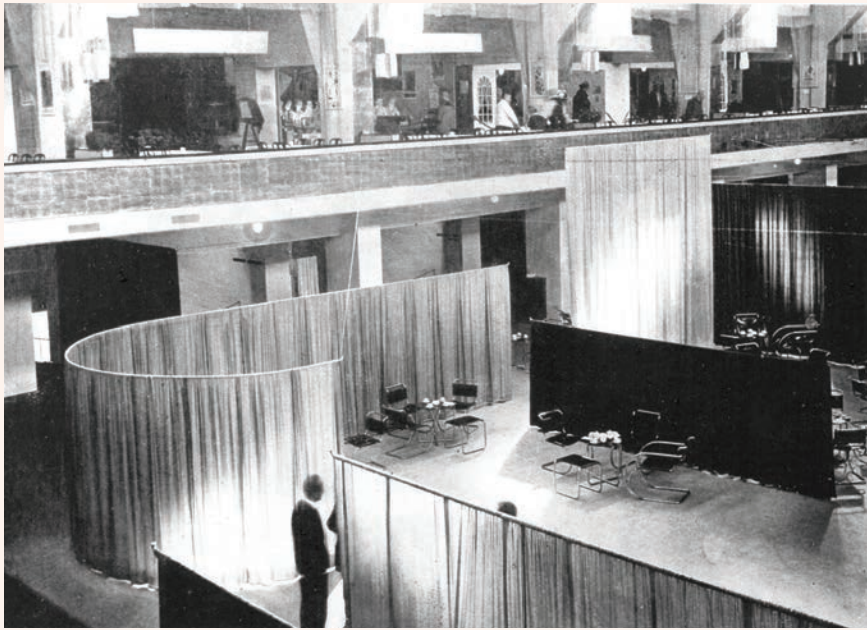
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Courtesy MoMA

**How Should We Live?
Propositions for the
Modern Interior**
Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd Street, New York
October 1–April 23

How Should We Live? Propositions for the Modern Interior, will recreate a dozen full-scale interior spaces dating from the 1920s to the 1950s and feature over 200 objects. Each interior will focus on the design elements within its specific setting, as well as its connection to external factors and attitudes— aesthetic, social, technological, and political.

Divided into three chronological groupings—the late 1920s to the early 1930s, the late 1930s to the mid-1940s, and the late 1940s into the 1950s—the scenes will also explore several designers' own living spaces, and frequently overlooked areas in the field of design, such as textile furnishings, wallpapers, kitchens, temporary exhibitions, and promotional displays. Works by major women architect-designers, many created in partnerships, also will be highlighted. Featured collaborators include Lilly Reich and Mies van der Rohe; Florence Knoll and Herbert Matter; and Charlotte Perriand and Le Corbusier.

Among the interiors on display will be the 1927 Velvet-Silk Café, designed by Reich for a women's fashion exhibition in Berlin, with tubular steel furniture by Van der Rohe; 1929 furniture and exhibition designs by Perriand, Le Corbusier, and Pierre Jeanneret; the 1948 Knoll furniture showroom in Manhattan, designed by Knoll and Matter; and a 1959 study bedroom for the Maison du Brésil at the Cité Internationale Universitaire de Paris by Perriand, Le Corbusier, and Lúcio Costa.



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Courtesy Stedelijk Museum

Question the Wall Itself

Walker Art Center,
1750 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis
November 20–May 21

Contemporary political issues will be considered through the lens of the interior in *Question the Wall Itself*, which will feature works by 23 artists from 15 countries. The Walker has commissioned seven of the works, and although most date from 2012 to the present, some are from the 1970s.

Question the Wall Itself will present a wide variety of works conceived as rooms, including everything from an anteroom, a living room, and a prison cell, to a showroom, a library, and an interior garden. “Recasting our conception of interior space and design, the works on view will exist between artwork, prop and set, or stage, challenging understandings of social convention, habit, and code,” said the exhibition’s curator, Walker Art Center artistic director Fionn Meade.

For example, artist Walid Raad’s 2014 “Letters to the Reader (1864, 1877, 1916, 1923),” creates and questions “potentially hollow decors imperceptible to spectators...the speculative promise of museum-scale showrooms for modern and contemporary ‘Arab art’ in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates,” said Meade. Also according to Meade, Jonathas de Andrade’s 2012 “Nostalgia, a Class Sentiment” “animates the modern architecture of Brazil as a foyer of the politics of nostalgia.” He added: “Through each of the artist’s examinations of specific interior spaces and architecture—both public and private—the political, social and subjective contexts of these environments are revealed.”



Edouard Fraipont



© Walid Raad. Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York. Photo: Steven Probert.

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Design trade receive complimentary admission with pre-registration by October 24.
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This image: Pedro E. Guerrero/Courtesy ADFP; Lower left: Courtesy Center for Architecture

Archtober

Every October, hundreds of architects gather to celebrate New York City's architecture and design month, playfully dubbed "Archtober." Here's our guide to what not to miss for this year's sixth annual festival. For details and even more events, visit archtober.org.

ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN FILM FESTIVAL Various Venues September 28–October 2

Now in its eighth season, the Architecture and Design Film Festival showcases new movies about the built world across the globe. A few of the highlights include *Eero Saarinen: The Architect Who Saw the Future*, *Pedro E. Guerrero: A Photographer's Journey*, *Peter Behrens - A Pioneer in Architecture*, and *Where Architects Live*.



AUTHENTICITY AND INNOVATION Center For Architecture September 30–January 14

This exhibition presents 28 historic structures in New York City that have been given new life by entrepreneurs, architects, and developers. While New York has about 1,500 designated landmarks and 139 historic districts, the show's projects are not officially designated as "significant," so their reuse represents different forms preservation beyond local regulations and laws.

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LOUIS KAHN AND THE MAKING OF PUBLIC SPACE TODAY

**Four Freedoms Park Conservancy
1110 2nd Avenue, Suite 301
October 1, 1:30–4:00 p.m.**

A tribute to Louis Kahn’s posthumously completed Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park, this discussion will touch on the challenges of creating public spaces today and examine the story of the park’s design, the sudden death of its architect, the near-bankruptcy of its city, and the efforts that made it happen anyway.



Courtesy Center for Architecture

INSECURITIES: TRACING DISPLACEMENT AND SHELTER

**Museum of Modern Art
October 1–January 22**

Insecurities explores how contemporary architecture and design have addressed shelter in light of global refugee emergencies, touching on how refugee camps have actually become de facto cities. The exhibition includes plans by architects, designers, and artists, including the emergency structure Better Shelter by the IKEA Foundation UNHCR, along with works by Estudio Teddy Cruz, Henk Wildschut, Tiffany Chung, and others.



Brenden Bannion/Courtesy MoMA



Courtesy Lowline

BUILDING OF THE DAY: THE LOWLINE
October 2

Designed by James Ramsey of RAAD Studio, the Lowline will transmit natural light deep into the Williamsburg Bridge Trolley Terminal, below Delancey Street on Manhattan’s Lower East Side, through a series of “remote skylights.” The result will be a unique subterranean public space full of plants and trees.



Linda Schuur

STHLMNYC CONVERSATION
Center for Architecture
October 7
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

This symposium brings together urban planners, architects, and policy makers from Stockholm and New York to discuss the future of cities and urban architecture. Participants will focus on small-scale projects that impact the urban scale, and the program will be split into two parts: *Politics & Planning* and *Architecture & Technology*.



Courtesy Studio V

BRONX POST OFFICE
October 9

The ongoing adaptive re-use and renovation of the Bronx Central Annex Post Office into Bronx Post Place by New York firm Studio V will incorporate a new mixed-use program that will open the building to a once-barren streetscape when it is complete in 2017.



Albert Vecerka/ESTO

BUILDING OF THE DAY:
MANHATTAN DISTRICT GARAGE AND SALT SHED
October 11

Dattner Architects with WXY Studio designed these utterly unique structures. The District Garage includes a double-skin facade, articulating metal fins, and a green roof, and the Salt Shed uses exposed concrete to create a geometric composition that resembles a giant earthen mass or a salt crystal, depending on who you ask.



Gabriel Ellison-Scowcroft

BUILDING OF THE DAY:
SCHERMERHORN ROW
October 10

This 1812 complex of Federal-style buildings near the South Street Seaport is one of the oldest standing structures in Manhattan. These edifices have contained countless houses, restaurants, and hotels over the years, and now they are the heart of the historic Seaport District.



Timothy Schenck

WALKING TOUR OF THE HILLS ON GOVERNORS ISLAND
Governors Island
October 11, 4:30–6:00 p.m.

Tour Governors Island's latest public attraction, the Hills, a dynamic, undulating new park designed by Dutch urban planning and landscape architecture firm West 8. Rising far above sea level, the Hills, which opened July 19, includes Grassy Hill, with gentle slopes overlooking Governors Island; Slide Hill, with slides and play areas; Discovery Hill, which rises 40 feet above the site and includes site-specific art installations; and Outlook Hill, a 70-foot-tall summit with 360-degree views of the region.



Courtesy Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum

NATIONAL DESIGN WEEK
Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum
October 15–23

A weeklong celebration of design held in conjunction with the 2016 National Design Awards. Events include the NYC Teen Design Fair (October 18), the National Design Awards Winners Salon (October 18), and several workshops and family programs. Awards will be handed out at the National Design Awards Gala on October 20. Moshe Safdie (his iconic Habitat 67 is shown above) will be honored with the Lifetime Achievement award.



William Higginson

BUILDING OF THE DAY: INDUSTRY CITY
October 22

Built within an enormous industrial complex in Greenwood, Brooklyn, Industry City is a creative working community that encompasses manufacturing, design, art, architecture, biotech, clean-tech, media production, fashion, and food.



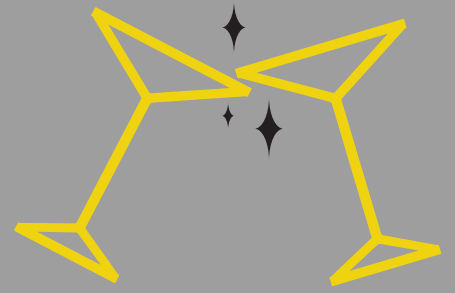
Courtesy Zaha Hadid Architects

BUILDING OF THE DAY: 520 WEST 28TH STREET
October 24

Designed prior to Zaha Hadid's death and her only building in Manhattan, this luxury residential project along the High Line has a glassy chevron facade that reflects its interlaced levels.

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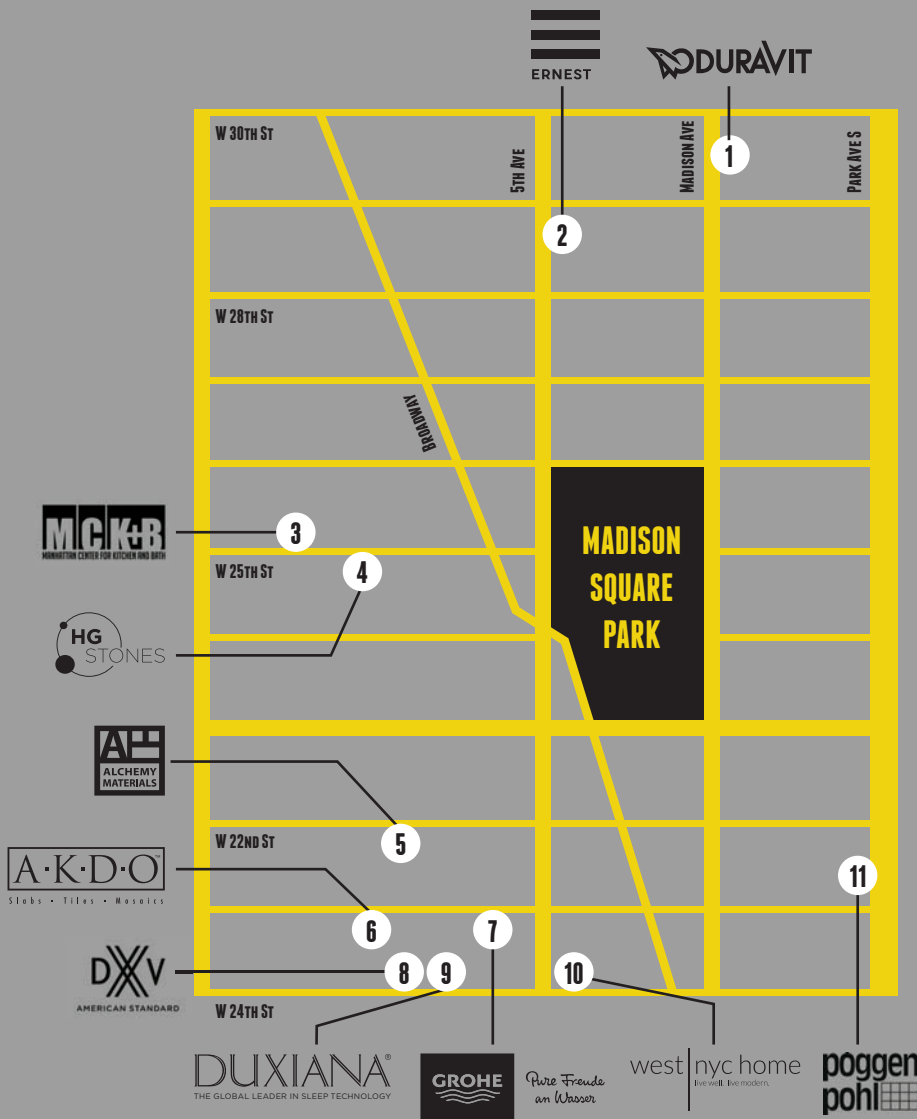
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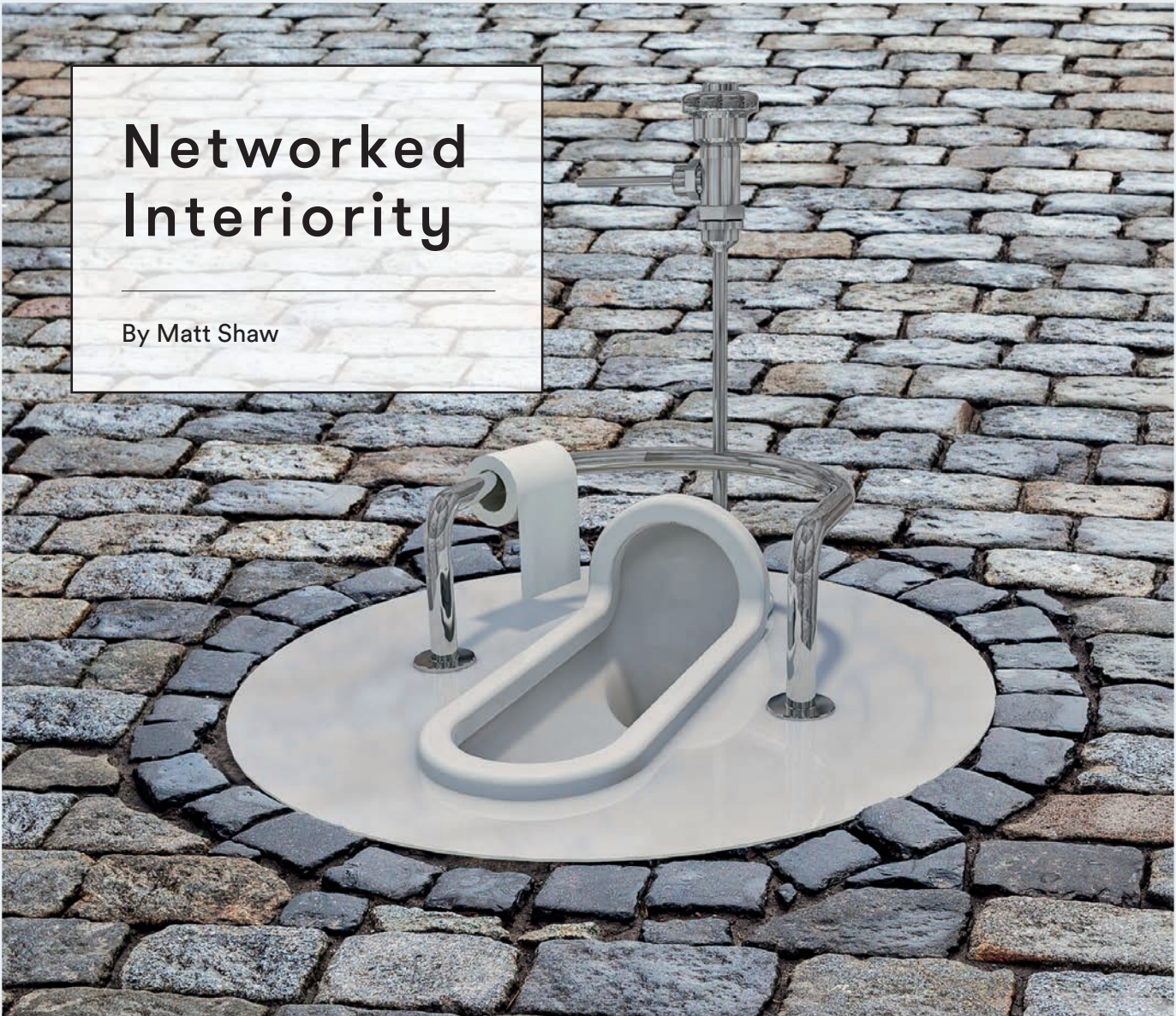
A N — Interior

Archtober

NYC
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Networked Interiority

By Matt Shaw



The 9th Berlin Biennale, *The Present in Drag*, is “more rooted in a time than a place,” explained curator Lauren Boyle of the New York–based collective DIS. For this citywide art exhibition, the DIS team wanted to expose the contradictions and sheer spectacle of today’s hyper-networked, content-saturated culture. The exhibition breaks from many past Berlin Biennales, as it does not, on the surface, take an immediate political stance. Instead, it acts as a platform for artists to perform the present, in a sense, caricaturing and parodying it in order to tease out the contradictions and confusing realities of contemporary culture. DIS assembled a list of young artists and collectives, including 69, Cécile B. Evans, Simon Denny, Hito Steyerl, and more to show across five venues in Berlin.

Many of the works confront the Internet and the effect that it has on our lives and the way we create

our identities. Three of the works explicitly deal with architecture, and how it is being affected by changes in technology and new social cues in an evolving world.

The first and most outwardly architectural is “#3” by architect Shawn Maximo. In collaboration with German kitchen- and bath-fixture manufacturer Dornbracht—famous for its ongoing forward-thinking collaborations with artists since 1996—Maximo created a room based on the idea of a “comfort station” where you can get all the comforts of home, such as going to the bathroom, getting a drink, or taking a nap...but in the Kunste-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art. In the installation, a squat toilet, a kitchen sink, a large-screen monitor with digital videos and illustrations, and light boxes illuminated with images of nature create a place where the most intimate, private ritual collides with a social gathering space—a place for both comfort and information.



The title, “#3” suggests a new way of thinking about the bathroom as a place where maybe you can use the toilet while your friend washes dishes and watches a movie. Maximo wanted to tackle some of the taboos and boundaries that we hang on to despite their lack of usefulness today. “The bathroom is a place where there is a lot of potential to make more of an impact in terms of design and aesthetic,” he explained.

Another installation at the Kunste-Werke is “ARCHITECTURE,” a long, thickened wall that incorporates six nooks filled with pillows, by London-based åyr. These cozy spaces are outfitted with outlets for phone charging and are meant to challenge our assumptions of “openness” and “crossing boundaries” common to both the sharing economy and corporate architectural discourse. The work also makes reference to Rem

Facing page

A conceptual rendering shows a squat toilet in a plaza, possibly the most extreme combination of the public and private places we inhabit.

This page

The room designed by architect Shawn Maximo in collaboration with Dornbracht features a toilet in a public space that also serves as an information hub for the biennale.



Courtesy Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art





Facing page

London-based collective *āyr* created a wall with nooks for relaxing and recharging, challenging the assumption that walls separate people.

Left

New Eelam by Christopher Kulendran Thomas shows a new sharing app in a dematerialized living room. The work subverts traditional systems of power and influence through border-defying technology.

Below

A still from the short film *Speculative Ambiance*, produced by Iconoclast, shows an Oculus Rift user “overlooking” Pariser Platz, the nexus of Berlin’s tourism, and a place where global political and financial networks operate invisibly behind unrelated neo-traditional “German” facades. The paradox of being there and also being in the virtual is a strong theme through the biennale.

Koolhaas’s Berlin Wall studies and *Testo Junkie* by Paul B. Preciado, which conflates spaces of protection and incarceration.

Completing the trifecta of architectural, boundary-challenging works is a deconstructed showroom apartment in the Akademie der Künste by Christopher Kulendran Thomas titled “New Eelam.” In the apartment, a video explains the concept of a new app that would utilize the sharing economy to introduce users to a network of luxury communal housing units. The app—named after the failed neo-Marxist movement in Eelam, Sri Lanka—breaks out of traditional borders, operating outside the traditional power networks of

late capitalist, neo-colonial influence. By establishing a collectively owned network of housing inside the existing system, Kulendran Thomas hopes to create a new way of living through the “luxury of communalism rather than private property.”

Combined, the three artworks attempt to make sense of the architectural implications of the political and technological forces that are swirling around us, but are hard to pin down in an architectural context. Contemporary art succeeds where architecture struggles in this exploration, perhaps because art can more adeptly capture these subtle forces not necessarily embedded in actual buildings.





Wikimedia Commons; Opposite above: Courtesy Fondation Le Corbusier; Opposite below: Iwan Baan/Courtesy SO-IL

Reflection: Cocooning

How can interior architecture and design help to erase the boundaries of public and private spheres?

By Florian Idenburg

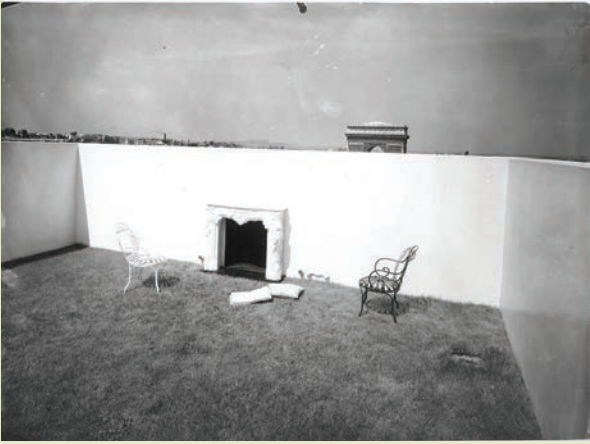
Above

In Weelde Siet Tot, (In Luxury, Look Out) was painted by the Dutch artist Jan Steen in 1663. The painting warns against degeneration via complacency in the household. The housewife has fallen asleep while chaos fills the home: A boy smokes a pipe, a pig drinks from the beer tap, and the family engages in general debauchery.

The following essay is an excerpt from the forthcoming book, Solid Objectives... Order, Edge, Aura, to be published in early 2017 by Lars Muller Publishers.

The design of interiors has come to embody a line of egocentric thoughts. It purports to put our body—and possibly even our soul and individualistic existence—at its center. Womb-like sensations arise, promising warmth, safety, and other prenatal comforts. How do

we sufficiently swaddle or cushion the self for it to survive our savage reality? The interior becomes a pure haven for the spirit, something that seems increasingly public. We create mobile cocoons, shielding ourselves with screens, headsets, and blank stares. We eschew or minimize contact with others. Absurdly, even though technology has seemingly brought the outside world in, our devices have diminished points of contact with it.



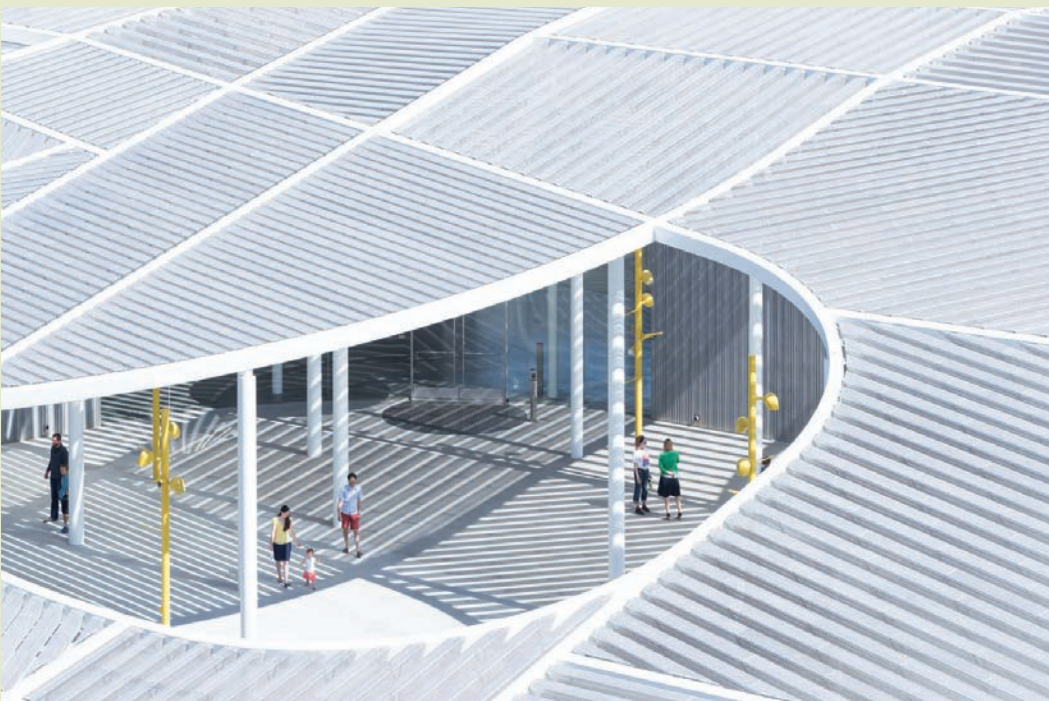
The public realm is contained, compressed, and trapped behind thinner and thinner layers of glass. The exterior is powered up or down with the swipe of a finger.

While this notion of interior design evokes thoughts of monastic disconnection, of dwelling in a shielded totality, we would like to consider its opposite: the interior as a locus for a new collective condition, an inside that fosters exchange. After all, it is mostly in the perceived comfort of our interiors that we let our guards down and allow for connections to occur. Up until modernity, humanity experienced its interiors—even those of the dwelling—as a public domain. The living room was a place for conflict and exchange. Even our beds were shared. Given this, let us regard the interior not as a space created by protective surfaces and moods, but rather as a porous field defined by realms and structures. Otherness will trickle in and a productive contamination will ensue.

Beyond mere spatial definition, a new exchange must be fueled by content. This collective interior demands activation by things: Volumes and objects, elements that supersede their functional obligations to play suggestive and symbolic roles—think of the Kaaba, the Butsudan, the kitchen table, and the parliamentary mace. We see this as the vivid place that sociologist Bruno Latour depicts wherein “each object gathers around itself a different assembly of relevant parties. Each object triggers new occasions to passionately differ and dispute. Each object may also offer new ways of achieving closure without having to agree on much else.” In the place of comfort, the new interior instead offers devices of contestation and the promise of an active public.

In order to accommodate differences, an architecture of the interior will be assembled with character-filled structures and objects that trigger discursiveness, to fuel the fire, the textures taking on qualities of the outside, rupturing and destabilizing. Think of sublime volumes, endless depths, infinity pools, and fillets. Think of Andrei Tarkovsky, the rain inside, cobblestones in the living room, and sand in the bathtub.

The interior as a space of contestation might recoup some of the scope architecture has forfeited to the creators of soothing mood boards and Pinterest boards. As layered and fleeting realities of the exterior return indoors, condensed and redirected, they might unsettle the insulated, comfortable individual in pursuit of a more vital collective interiority.



Above

Le Corbusier's paradoxical, 1929 apartment for Charles de Beistegui turned rationalist domesticity on its head. The outdoor living room featured grass, a rococo fireplace, a mirror, candlesticks, and an ornate sideboard. The architect's surrealist description reads “an irrational living room, featuring indoor furniture in an outdoor setting.”

Left

The Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem Museum of Art will open on November 13 in Davis, California. The canopy creates an outdoor space that is simultaneously interior and exterior, public and private.



Michelle Rose

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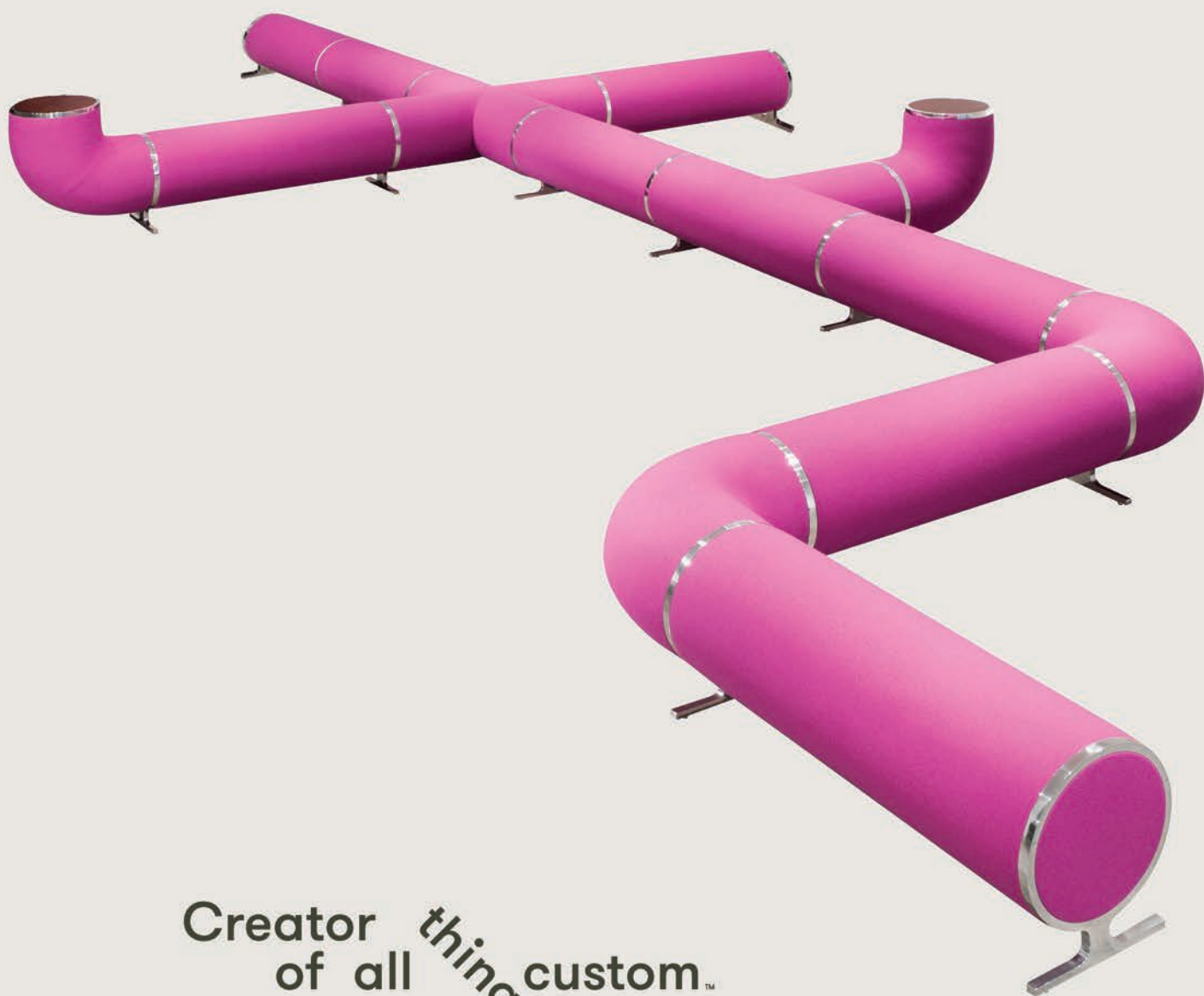


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